

tance was through cultivated grounds, and a luxuriantly rich soil; there is a very large zequia well out from the river; the plain appeared to extend in every direction fifteen or twenty miles. The camp was made at the village of the Maricopas; notwithstanding a different language, all that has been said of the Pimos is applicable to them. They live in cordial amity, and their habits, agriculture and manufactures are the same, as also their religion, which consists in a simple belief in a great over-ruling spirit. This seems to have proved a foundation for a most enviable practical morality. Don Jose Messio is their governor, and their population is estimated as high as ten thousand. Their dwellings are dome shaped wicker work, thatched with straw or cornstalks, and from twenty to fifty feet in diameter; in front is usually a large arbor, on which is piled the cotton in the pod, for drying; horses, mules, oxen, chickens and dogs seem to be the only domestic animals; they have axes, hoes, shovels, and harrows. The soil is so easily pulverized, as to make the plow unnecessary.

Busy preparations were made for the march about noon next day, to encounter a jornada of

above forty miles, caused by a great bend of the river with mountains. The rations were found to have suffered great loss or wastage; of the beeves many were in good order, and three of the oxen were still left. A few exchanges for fatter animals were made; the pack saddles in excess of twelve to a company, were disposed of. Eight mules, abandoned by the General, had been picked up by the Maricopas, and were delivered to me.

The hospitality and generosity of these allied tribes is noted; they feed and assist in every way travelers who are in need; fortunately, perhaps, these have been few. I observed them parching grain in a basket, by throwing in live coals and keeping all in motion, by tossing into the air.

They have the simplicity of nature, and none of the affected reserve and dignity characteristic of other Indians, before whites. At the sound of a trumpet, playing of a violin, the killing of a beef, they rush to see and hear, with delight or astonishment strongly exhibited.

About a half bushel of corn was procured for each animal, and three days' rations of corn meal.

*December 25th.*—The march was up hill, and the

road rather sandy. Half an hour before sundown, having long seen Leroux's smoke, indicating he had found grass, I pushed on to examine the ground before dark; I stationed the sentinels so that the mules could be turned loose in the mezquit, without much danger of their escaping to seek water. The wagons arrived at 8 o'clock, the march having been eighteen miles. The weather has been quite warm for several days, but fortunately, as there is no water, it was cloudy this afternoon.

Next morning, with reveille at 4.30 o'clock, the battalion could not be got in motion much before 7. Some rough, difficult ground was found in the gap of the ridge, which consumed much time. I then rode ahead and reached the river about sunset. The guides had preceded me, and following their path, (a wrong one) I passed through a very uneven willow-grown bottom of the river and found them taking their ease at the water-edge, with some yellow, broken, years-old grass near, which had been their attraction, as "the best the country afforded."

I selected a camp-ground, and marked it by little fires, made by some packmen, who had arrived. The wagons came about 7.30.

The river is here brackish; this is caused by the Saline River, a larger stream than the Gila above, which flows into it below the Maricopa village. The day's march had been twenty-three miles.

Here I relieved the train of three hundred mule shoes, and the nails, by making a "cache;" which in far western language, means burying valuables in the ground, and noting by some permanent object, the exact position.

For the next six days the marches averaged ten miles. It was an unremitting struggle with the rude barrenness of a rainless wilderness. Once, the mule drove was sent four miles to some grass which the guides had reported, but which was found to be nearly worthless; Weaver said, it sprang up from a shower which fell there four years ago, as he knew; (but the duration of a cycle of these phenomena unfortunately he could not determine.) The animals existed on corn, doled by the pint, with now and then flag grass, and willow bushes on the river margin and sand-bars. Many miles of road were beaten, with much dust, in a clay formation, where mule tracks were six inches deep; much sand was en-

countered, and several volcanic bluffs, which required much labor to be made passable.

The second of these days, we met two travelers, a Chilean and a California refugee; they gave very confused information of a renewed state of war in California, and of bodies of armed men, with droves coming to Sonora. They had passed another small party a few days before.

The same day Leroux and four other guides, and Mr. Hall were sent forward, with dispatches; and they were instructed to send back information of any thing observed on the route, of importance to the expedition. They were also ordered to bring fresh mules and beeves to meet the battalion as early as possible. One of them was required to be at Warner's rancho, when the battalion should arrive there, about "January 21st."

*January 1st, 1847.*—Cottonwood-bark and branches, and mezquit, were added yesterday to the forage list. Many of the animals, including sheep, have appeared to be poisoned; a few have died, the others appear to be gradually recovering.

Whenever there is a bed where the river sometimes flows, we find more or less grass; there is little

doubt that only want of rain prevents its growth elsewhere; but the bottoms frequently show salty efflorescences; also much of it seems of mere clay, which I *think* will not produce vegetation.

We found in this night's camp a party described by the Mexicans whom we met, including a lady who was delivered of a fine child two days ago; and she traveled yesterday ten miles on horseback. They report the wells in the desert, of which the General wrote, to be dried up—probably filled partly with sand.

I am now preparing a boat of the two ponton wagon-bodies lashed together, end to end, between two dry cottonwood logs; in this I shall put all the baggage I can risk. The river is rapid, and in places three or four feet deep; and here it is one hundred and fifty yards wide. I have determined to send Lieutenant Stoneman in charge; he professes to have had similar experience, and is desirous to undertake it.

*January 6th.*—In five days but fifty-four miles of progress has been made, and after much anxiety the ponton boat, now first seen, has joined the battalion empty! The experiment proved a failure, and the stores have been landed in several places; but three

or four inches of water was to be found on several rapids.

Parties with pack mules have been out all the time striving to meet the boat, and recover at least the flour, from its load of two thousand five hundred pounds of provisions and corn. And these have not been heard from!

It was found necessary for our wagons to vary much from General Kearny's trail; and a road was cut, in places, through miles of dense thickets, etc.

Next day only seven miles could be made; points of stony ridges and clay gullies required much work.

The mules were ordered to be sent across the river to browse in the young willows, flag-grass, etc., and it turned out they had to swim.

*January 8th.*—Sixteen miles took the battalion to the mouth of the Gila.

"A vast bottom; the country about the two rivers is a picture of desolation; nothing like vegetation beyond the alluvium of the two rivers; bleak mountains, wild looking peaks, stony hills and plains, fill the view. We are encamped in the midst of wild hemp. The mules are in mezquit thickets, with a little bunch grass, a half a mile off."

*January 9th.*—We marched very early. The wagons were six hours reaching the crossing of the Colorado; about half of the road was bad, sand or soft clay; the pioneers did much work. The mules are weak, and their failing, or flagging to-day in ten miles, is very unpromising for the hundred mile stretch, dry and barren, before them. There is no grass, and only scanty cottonwood boughs for them to-night, but I sent out forty men to gather the fruit, called tornia, of a variety of the mezquit. They have gathered twelve or fifteen bushels, which has been spread out to be eaten on a hard part of the sand-bar.

Francisco was sent across the river to fire the thickets beyond—this to clear the way for the pioneer party in the morning. He says the river is deeper than usual; it is wider than the Missouri, and of the same muddy color. It is probable that sugar-cane may be cultivated here.

It is said to be sixty miles to tide water, and one hundred and sixty to the mouth of the river.

*January 10th.*—The mules were driven two miles to grass; some of the pack mule party arrived bringing four hundred and fifty pounds of flour; a

part of them had been left, hunting for another deposit. The companies were ordered to cross with their baggage, in the ponton boat, leaving empty wagons, teamsters and mules; the ford inclining down the river, was above a mile long and in two channels.

The battalion continued crossing with great difficulty all the night, the water in some places almost too deep to use a pole. The sheep were now doing better; lately a few had been left each day, and only one hundred and thirty remained.

"*January 11th, 9 p. m.*—With my mind full of anxiety, I force myself to the task of recording the deeds of the day. I am in camp at the 'well,' fifteen miles from the river crossing; I resolved that here the battalion *should* come to-day, and for these reasons: I had not rations or time, under the probable state of affairs in California, to spend another day beyond the river; there was nothing for the mules on this side, and as they must graze on that side, and must pull the wagons over when they came, there would be little less to do to-morrow than to-day.

The first difficulty I encountered this morning

was, that instead of the boat being in readiness to cross the sheep at five o'clock, as ordered, it was not over until quarter past seven; then I had all the baggage of the field and staff taken to it in ten minutes, and crossed myself, taking in addition ten of the men.

I was then told by the adjutant, that many loads of company baggage had still to be brought over; the round trips had averaged an hour and a half, and on all sides their idea of the impossibility of making the set day's journey was conveyed to me. I ordered that the rest of the baggage should come over in the wagons, the sheep only should be ferried; the remaining baggage was then loaded accordingly; the mules had been driven in at daylight, and I got the wagons started in the river at eight o'clock. The river runs swiftly and is at least four feet deep. About nine, I got to where the battalion had encamped. Here in willow bushes, which concealed everything, I found all in confusion; tents standing, every man doing his own pleasure, some eating, some cooking. Time was flying fast. I then saw a wagon, the only one of Company C, standing half way across, with mules

taken out on a sand bar, and nothing apparently doing. Half an hour later, its commander reported to me that they were stuck, etc., and could not get out. I told him they were not trying, that they had the same opportunities as the others, (the boat had been used turn about,) that other wagons had got over easily, and men in them against positive orders; that I should march immediately, and would not help him.

Meanwhile the boat came, half loaded with men and baggage, and with less than a third of the sheep, and instantly the crew disappeared. I had almost to force, personally, men into the boat to take it back. They then spent half an hour in water deeper than they could reach with their ten foot poles. So bad seemed the chance of getting over more than another load, that I sent word to Lieutenant Smith to bring over the boat full of the best sheep, and the others might be abandoned if they could not swim. Quite a number of mules had fallen and been drowned; the river had an inch of ice, where there was no current. Then I forced off the battalion, at 10 o'clock, to march fifteen miles of bad road, leaving a company in the river, and two-thirds of the sheep

on the other side. I knew these last were in good hands, and that the company would be excited to do their best. The first mile was ascending, and through deep sand; the mules were torpid and sullen. The prospect of getting to this camp was almost desperate. I gave orders that private mules should be put to the wagons; then, if necessary, to leave a wagon on the road. Two were thus left. I rode on and stopped all pack and loose animals at a patch of mezquit, the tornia or fruit of which had fallen to the ground, until all the wagons had passed. The fire of the pioneer party raged around us. I sent twenty men on, to collect mezquit beans or tornia, believing the battalion would arrive after dark; I knew there was no grass. I arrived at four o'clock, and was met by a man who told me 'there was not a drop of water.' The worse prospect for sixty miles ahead, instantly rose to frighten me for the three hundred and sixty nearly worn out footmen, who confide all to me.

I found the party digging most energetically, not only at the old well, but they had commenced another. Soon, in the first, they struck damp sand, and so on, to water. When the quicksands were

struck, they caved in so as to render it impossible to get water more than two or three inches deep. Many expedients were discussed; it was considered that our only hope was in a wash-tub belonging to the wife of a captain. The new well progressed slowly through hard clay. The first wagon came at sunset; at dusk the tub arrived. Lieutenant Oman reported to me, to my astonishment, that they were unwilling to give up that valuable article!—upon which our lives seemed to depend. I had it taken. The well then seemed for some time to work promisingly. Then it failed. I had the tub taken up, and the bottom, which had been bored, knocked out; then it worked better. It was late however and anxious expectants thronged the hole. I was seated in my tent, consulting with the guides, when Lieutenant Oman reported that the well had failed worse than ever.

My doubts seemed converted to the certainty of evil and disaster. I then learned that the company I had left were camped six miles back; their team having given out.

I sent for Weaver to inquire of the route, long thought of, to follow the river some sixty miles

down; he so represented the country as to give scarce a hope of its practicability under our circumstances. Once more I went to the well, and ordered a fresh detail to be put on the new one: they had found in ten feet only mud, and its upper surface was two feet lower than the old one, which was ten feet deep. I then with my mind full of trouble, sat down to write. In half an hour, Lieut. O. came and reported that in the new well, he had 'come to water that could be dipped with a camp kettle.' It was like a great light bursting upon darkness and gloom.

I am writing with effort to suppress feeling. This well failing, what had I to expect of the next, which I knew to be dry now, and not, like this, deriving its supply from a great river, and to be only reached by going without water for a night and two days, in addition to this hard day; and the next hope of water almost three of our average marches still further on; and *behind*, starvation and failure.

But my faith had not failed, for, at the worst, I gave orders for a beef to be slaughtered at daylight, to be cooked before ten o'clock, and other

preparations for the night following without water. The sheep were all got over.

Many mules gave out to-day, and at best the prospect is bad; not only want of water, but so very little for the poor animals to eat. I had five bushels of *tornia* brought here by each company.

It is half past ten o'clock at night; I have ordered Lieut. O. with twelve picked men to go through to-morrow to the Alamo Mocho, to dig and prepare for us.

Eighteen hours of unceasing labor has been my lot to-day, with anxiety enough to turn one grey. Our safety seems the accident of a pocket of clay—which served as a wall—reaching below the level of quicksand, which probably extends from the bed of the river.”

In the morning it took from 9 to 11.30 o'clock, to water the mules of three companies; then the march began, leaving the others to follow, when their mules were well watered. A guide had stopped at some scant straw colored “grass,” and camp was made about sundown. It was a wilderness of sand, mixed with gravel and small stones;

the only vegetable production a slim bush, which the New Mexicans call “stinking wood.”

The 13th, the march was commenced at sunrise; it was a hot day, and some bad sand was encountered. It was thirteen miles to the wells, and the battalion arrived at two o'clock. The advance party had improved an old well, and dug another; there was only mezquit without fruit. “Now after eight hours, the watering is still going on; the poor animals after drinking the impure warm water, seem unsatisfied, and have to be driven away to the bushes on which to browse.”

Next day signal smokes were frequently seen; believed to be made by Indians; a small party would have seen enough of them. It was about twenty-five miles to another old well, the *Pozo Hondo*; and Lieutenant Stoneman with twenty-five men and Weaver were sent early in the morning to go through and prepare for the battalion.

The corporal and two men, who against instructions, remained seeking more flour, left by the boat, had not yet come up; and two more men were missing since leaving the Colorado.

“I had lately a conversation with old Weaver,



which was not official. He said, 'the Tontos live in that range over there; I never see them with more than one or two lodges together; they are a band of the Coyoteros, and are called fools for their ignorance. When I went over, once, from the Pimos to the Cochanos and Mochabas, I met some lodges and had a fuss with them.'—'What sort?'—'Oh, we killed two or three and burnt their lodges, and took all the women and children and sold them.' 'What!' 'Yes, I have often caught the women and children of the Digger Indians and sold them in New Mexico and Sonora. They bring a hundred dollars. Mr. —, of Tucson told me a squaw I sold him, ran off, and was found dead, famished for water I s'pose, going over from the Pimos to the Colorado.' 'What, have you no feeling for her death, trying to return to her father and mother you tore her from?' 'I killed her father and mother, as like as not; they stole all our traps; as fast as we could stick a trap in the river, they'd come and steal it, and shoot arrows into our horses; they thought we would leave them for them to eat, but we built a big fire and burnt them up.'"

This Alamo Mocho (broken cottonwood) well is

near the foot of a very steep bank, perhaps eighty feet down to a remarkable depression of great extent and as wide as a great river; and most likely it is the bed of one, or of a dried up creek of the Gulf. The flat bottom is grown up with mezquit. (Two or three years after this date, a stream suddenly broke through, or made its appearance, much to the joy of some travelers; it is called New River.)

*January 14th.*—The march began at 11 A. M.: details had been at work the whole night, and up to that hour, drawing the scant water for mules and cattle; and it was found necessary to leave two wagons.

Some bad sand was encountered this day; sometimes only a little, blown from sand hills, which were skirted; then a great flat of baked clay, which had evidently been covered by water, on which the animals scarcely left a track. The battalion observed the tracks of hundreds of mules and horses; herds believed to have been driven within a few months to Sonora. Sea shells, and salt, found on this great plain, indicate that it was once the bottom of the Gulf.

Having marched seventeen miles, the battalion

came at dark to a mezquit thicket, and camped. There was no water.

Marching at sunrise, next day, seven miles over the flat broken plain, brought them to the Pozo Hondo. "The distant mountains to our left and front were mingled with clouds; the rising sun painted all with bright and varied hues, and then we saw the distinct colors of a rainbow. . . which only once before have we seen, in the other desert of Tucson."

Here were met fresh mules and some beeves, sent under charge of one guide; twenty-two of fifty-seven mules had been lost. There was great disappointment in the well; the water was issued by the gill; it was necessary to go on; a fat beef was killed and cooked; and the work of catching with the lazo, and harnessing the new mules, many of which were as wild as deer, and had to be thrown down, consumed the whole delay of near three hours; one mule, after being harnessed, broke away from three stout men, and ran off at great speed into the desert, unfollowed.

Here was heard the distressing news of a disastrous engagement of General Kearny; of his

wounds, and of the death of valued and loved officers, and many other dragoons. Captains Johnston and Moore and Lieutenant Hammond had fallen.

Eleven more miles were marched, and halt was then made until 2 o'clock A. M.; the mules were kept tied, and some bunch grass was cut and fed to them.

"Besides being nearly starved, our mules have had no water since yesterday morning; the men too, are without it; it is necessary to go on in the cold night, speedily to end this terrible state of things; the ten miles of much dreaded sand is before us."

At 2 A. M., January 16th the march was resumed.

"I had a large advance guard and all the guides on duty, telling Weaver not to lose sight of the leading wagon; it was starlight. Four miles from our bivouac I stopped until all had passed, and found that even then a team or two had apparently given out. I gave various orders of relief, transferred mules, etc.; toward daylight it was exceedingly cold, too much so to ride; then the guides got lost, and, by their not obeying strictly my orders, the wagons lost at least a mile; here the new teams